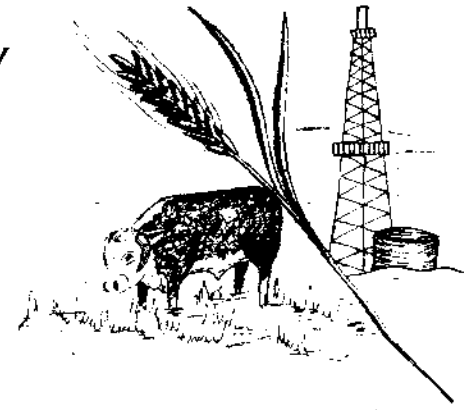


PONDERA COUNTY

20 4TH AVENUE S.W.

CONRAD, MONTANA 59425



July 3, 2007

11 JUL 2007 RCVD

11339.1

The Honorable Brian Schweitzer
Montana State Capitol Bldg.
P.O. Box 200801
Helena MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Schweitzer,

The Agriculture community and economy in Pondera County are severely threatened due to the continuing drought being experienced throughout North Central Montana and the Rocky Mountain Front.

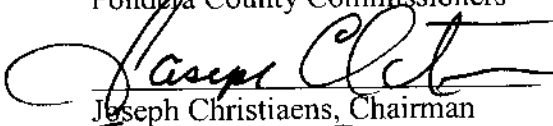
Lake Francis, the principle source of irrigation for approximately 86,000 acres of production ag land, holds 106,000 acre feet of water. On June 30, 2007, Lake Francis held only 25,150 acre feet. Prior to the onset of the irrigation season, Pondera Canal and Reservoir Company reduced the water value of its water share from the customary 18 inches per share to only 5 inches per share for this crop year. Normal shut off date for the system is October 15 but this year, the company will shut down all irrigation on August 15.

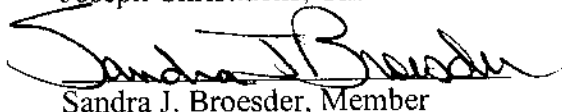
According to County sponsored weather stations located in Western, Central, and Eastern Pondera County, rainfall amounts for the spring growing season of March through June are 3.3 inches (51.4% of normal), 3.83 inches (60.9%), and 4.3 inches (70.9%) respectively. While winter wheat producers anticipate an average to below average yield, spring wheat, barley, canola, and camelina producers have little to look forward to. Some sporadic precipitation will save few hay crops, livestock water supplies are in jeopardy, and grazing lands have been and continue to be severely impacted.

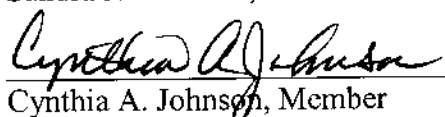
Pondera County would like to request a Drought Natural Disaster Determination. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Pondera County Commissioners


Joseph Christiaens, Chairman


Sandra J. Broesder, Member


Cynthia A. Johnson, Member